

Harmonised Labour Cost Index (HLCI). Base 2020

First Quarter 2026. Provisional data

Main results

- The cost per hour worked increased by 4.9% in the annual rate in the series adjusted for calendar and seasonal effects, and 5.3% in the original series.
- The activity that recorded the greatest increase in the annual rate in adjusted data was Education (9.1 %).
- The quarterly variation in the cost per hour worked, after eliminating calendar and seasonal effects, was 1.9%.

More information

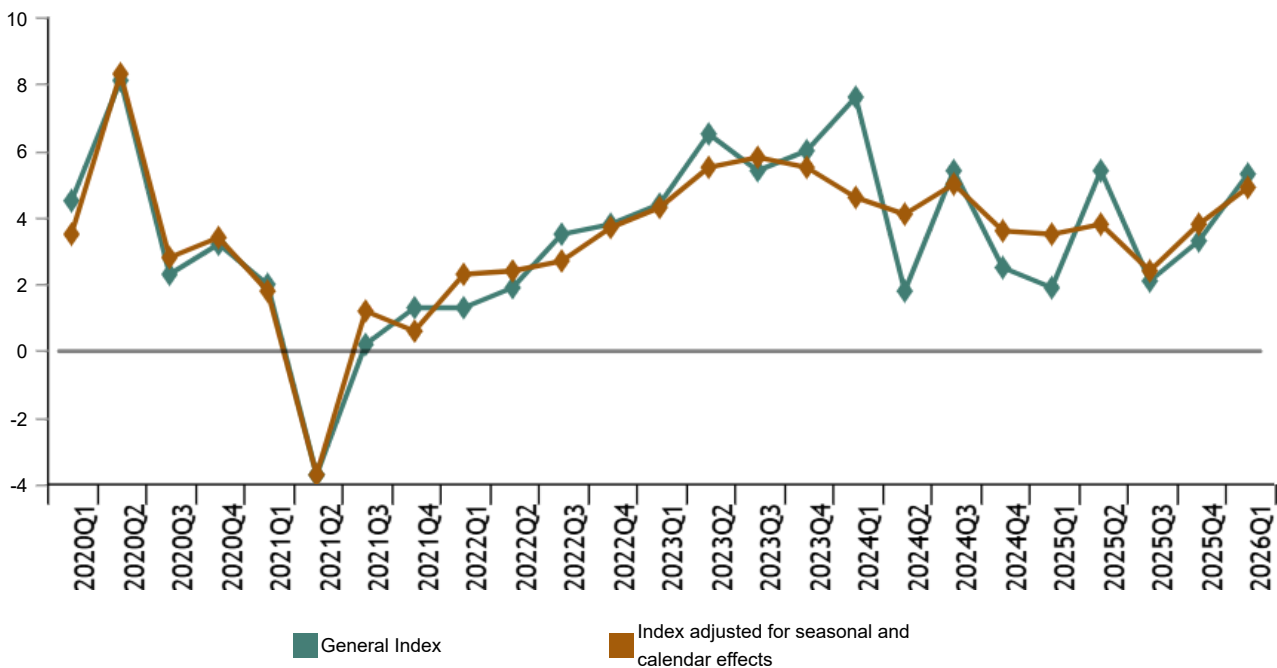
- [Tables annex](#)
- [Detailed results](#)
- [Weightings](#)

The labour cost per hour worked, measured by the HLCI -keeping the structure by branches of activity constant- increased by 4.9% in the first quarter compared with the same period in the previous year, if seasonal and calendar effects are eliminated.

In unadjusted data, the annual variation of the cost per hour was 5.3%.

Variation of the general index and index adjusted for seasonal and calendar effects

Annual rate. Percentage



On an annual basis, using seasonally and calendar-adjusted data, both wage costs and other costs rose by 4.9%.

Harmonised Labour Cost Index. First quarter 2026

Index and annual rates by cost components

	General Index		Index adjusted for seasonal and calendar effects	
	Index	Rate	Index	Rate
Total labour cost	114.0	5.3	120.7	4.9
Wages	112.9	5.3	120.6	4.9
Other costs	117.0	5.2	120.7	4.9
Labour costs excluding extraordinary and late payments	114.7	4.7	120.3	4.6

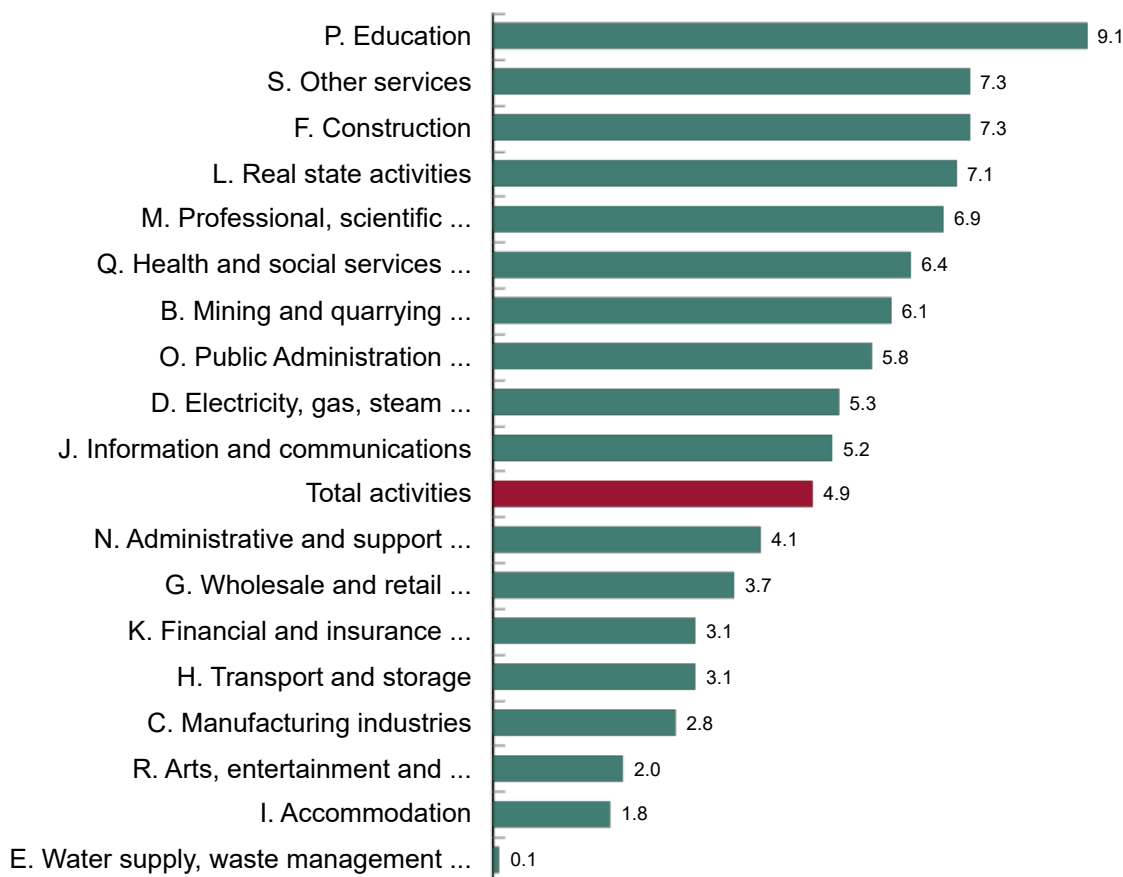
Results by activity sections

The activities with the highest annual rates this quarter, having eliminated seasonal and calendar effects, were *Education* (9.1%), *Other services* (7.3%) and *Construction* (7.3%).

The labour cost fell by *Water supply, waste management and remediation activities* (0.1 %), *Accommodation* (1.8 %) and *Arts, entertainment and recreation* (2.0 %).

Index adjusted for seasonal and calendar effects. Activity sections. First quarter 2026

Annual rate. Percentage

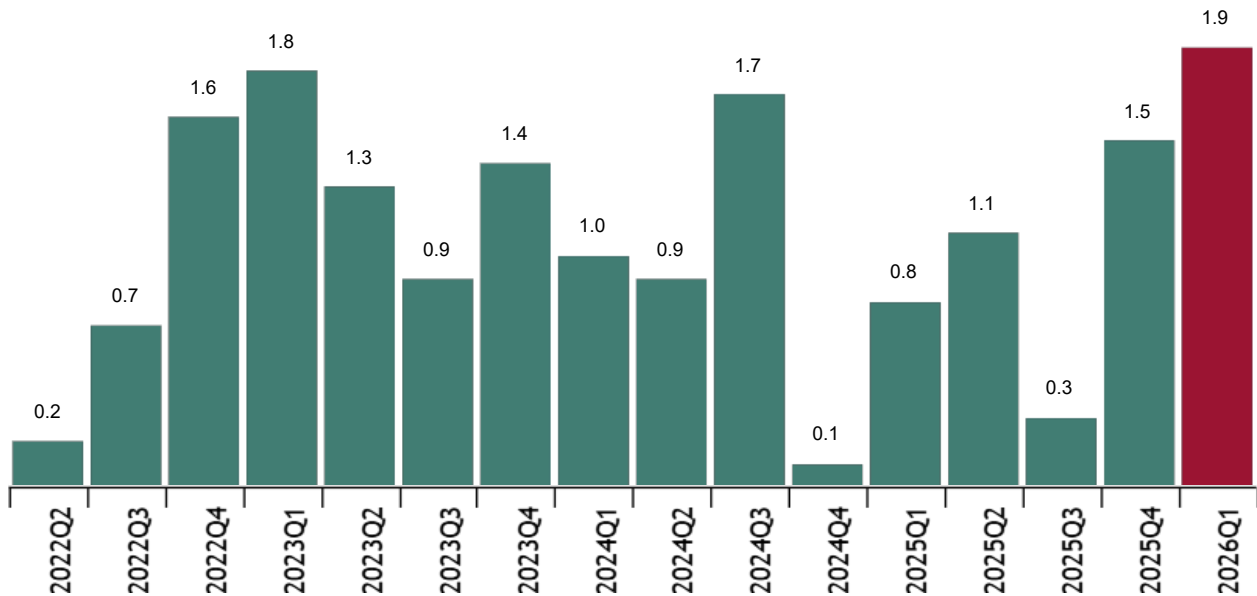


Quarterly evolution of the index

The variation in the HCLI between the 1st and 4th quarter 2026, eliminating the seasonality and calendar effects, was 1.9%.

Labour Cost Index adjusted for seasonal and calendar effects

Quarterly rate. Percentage



The quarterly wages cost rate, deseasonalised and corrected for calendar effects, was 2.1%. On the other hand, other costs rose by 1.1%.

Excluding seasonal and calendar adjustment, the quarterly rate was -7.1% mainly due to the greater weight of extraordinary payments in this quarter compared to the previous one.

Harmonised Labour Cost Index. First quarter 2026

Index and quarterly rates by cost components

	General Index		Index adjusted for seasonal and calendar effects	
	Index	Rate	Index	Rate
Total labour cost	114.0	-7.1	120.7	1.9
Wages	112.9	-9.1	120.6	2.1
Other costs	117.0	-1.1	120.7	1.1
Labour costs excluding extraordinary and late payments	114.7	-3.6	120.3	1.6

Revision and updating of data

INE has today updated the HCLI data for the fourth quarter 2025. All results are available on [INEBase](#).

Methodological note

The Harmonised Labour Cost Index (HLCI) is a quarterly continuous statistical operation whose objective is to provide a common and comparable measure of labour cost per hour worked for the whole of the European Union, allowing the monitoring of the evolution of said labour costs.

Indices with base 2020 are provided for total labour costs, wages and salaries and other costs net of subsidies received for the use of labour factor (includes social contributions payable by employers and non-wage payments). The index for total labour cost is also provided excluding extraordinary payments and delayed payments.

Type of operation: Statistics presented mainly in the form of indices

Base year: 2020.

Population scope: Employees in local units

Sources of information: The Quarterly Labour Cost Survey which is conducted on the basis of the Social Security contribution accounts. General Scheme: Sections B to S of CNAE-09 and Special Scheme for Seafarers: Sea Transport (Division 50 of CNAE-09). In order to cover all employees of the general government, information from the DARETRI file is used.

Geographical scope: the entire national territory.

Reference period of the results: the calendar quarter.

Calculation method: Laspeyres' Chain Index.


For more information, you can access the [methodology](#) and the [standardised methodological report](#).

INE statistics are produced in accordance with the Code of Good Practice for European Statistics. More information in [Quality in the INE and Code of Good Practices](#).

For further information see [INEbase](#)

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 Press office: (+34) 91 583 93 63 / (+34) 661 944 540 / (+34) 678 168 837 – gprensa@ine.es

 Information area: (+34) 91 583 91 00 – www.ine.es/infoine/?L=1